

into America to commit mass murder. When the domestic attack occurs, Biden and Harris will not be able to adequately respond. Credible leadership is imperative to protect American families.

PATHWAYS TO THE AMERICAN DREAM

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the college-for-all mentality failed our country's students.

It failed students who paid or borrowed for degrees with no return on their investment.

It failed workers who lack the skills to succeed in their field.

It failed businessowners who are left with open positions they can't fill.

And it failed entire industries suffering from a widening skills gap.

That is why I cosponsored the Promoting Employment and Lifelong Learning (PELL) Act.

The PELL Act will allow students to use Pell grants for high quality, short-term education programs, creating even more pathways to the American Dream.

Instead of financing an expensive diploma, students will obtain in-demand skills so they can be successful in the workforce. This is the right path forward for postsecondary education.

RECOGNIZING ANNIE PALMER OF INDIANOLA

(Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. MILLER-MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Annie Palmer of Indianola who received the Grow Your Future Award from the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation.

Each year, the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation offers the Grow Your Future Award to young Iowans who work in agriculture to help grow their businesses. Last year, Annie submitted her business, H8R Acres, which raises Berkshire hogs and Navajo-Churro sheep for their meat and wool.

After several rounds of voting, Annie was selected as a finalist which involved a pitch-off to determine which award she would receive. At the end of the conference, Annie went home with \$2,500, which she plans to put toward building a new shed for lambing or farrowing.

I also thank the Iowa Farm Bureau Federation for hosting this annual competition to financially support the next generation of Iowa farmers. This competition has been a great way to encourage young farmers to get into the agricultural business and grow the farming community in Iowa.

Congratulations to Annie and the rest of the winners of this year's Grow Your Future Award. I look forward to seeing their businesses produce.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 2, 2023.

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Pursuant to the permission granted in Clause 2(h) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Clerk received the following message from the Secretary of the Senate on February 2, 2023, at 4:50 p.m.

That the Senate passed S. 223.

That the Senate agreed to H. Con. Res. 11. Appointments:

Senate Trustee to the James Madison Memorial Fellowship foundation
Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group conference during the 118th Congress

Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution

Board of Trustees of the Harry S. Truman Scholarship Foundation

Congressional-Executive Commission on the People's Republic of China

Canada-U.S. Interparliamentary Group conference during the 118th Congress

Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution

Washington's Farewell Address

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Clerk of the House of Representatives:

OFFICE OF THE CLERK,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, February 6, 2023.

Hon. KEVIN MCCARTHY,
The Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: Under Clause 2(g) of Rule II of the Rules of the U.S. House of Representatives, I herewith designate Ms. Lisa P. Grant, Deputy Clerk; Mr. Kevin F. McCumber, Deputy Clerk; and Ms. Cheryl H. Muller, Director of Personnel, to sign any and all papers and perform all other acts for me under the name of the Clerk of the House for which they would be authorized to do by virtue of this designation, except such as are provided by statute, in case of my temporary absence or disability.

This designation shall remain in effect for the 118th Congress, or until modified by me.

With best wishes, I am,

Sincerely,

CHERYL L. JOHNSON,
Clerk of the House.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 11 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1700

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Ms. GREENE of Georgia) at 5 p.m.

HOOR OF MEETING ON TOMORROW

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at 10 a.m. tomorrow.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE HISTORIC LANDS REACQUISITION ACT

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 548) to take certain Federal lands in Tennessee into trust for the benefit of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 548

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Eastern Band of Cherokee Historic Lands Reacquisition Act".

SEC. 2. LAND TAKEN INTO TRUST FOR THE EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS.

(a) LANDS INTO TRUST.—Subject to such rights of record as may be vested in third parties to rights-of-way or other easements or rights-of-record for roads, utilities, or other purposes, the following Federal lands managed by the Tennessee Valley Authority and located on or above the 820-foot (MSL) contour elevation in Monroe County, Tennessee, on the shores of Tellico Reservoir, are declared to be held in trust by the United States for the use and benefit of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians:

(1) SEQUOYAH MUSEUM PROPERTY.—Approximately 46.0 acres of land generally depicted as "Sequoyah Museum", "Parcel 1", and "Parcel 2" on the map titled "Eastern Band of Cherokee Historic Lands Reacquisition Map 1" and dated April 30, 2015.

(2) SUPPORT PARCEL.—Approximately 11.9 acres of land generally depicted as "Support Parcel" on the map titled "Eastern Band of Cherokee Historic Lands Reacquisition Map 2" and dated April 30, 2015.

(3) CHOTA MEMORIAL PROPERTY AND TANASI MEMORIAL PROPERTY.—Approximately 18.2 acres of land generally depicted as "Chota Memorial 1" and "Tanasi Memorial" on the

map titled “Eastern Band of Cherokee Historic Lands Reacquisition Map 3” and dated April 30, 2015, and including the Chota Memorial and all land within a circle with a radius of 86 feet measured from the center of the Chota Memorial without regard to the elevation of the land within the circle.

(b) **PROPERTY ON LANDS.**—In addition to the land taken into trust by subsection (a), the improvements on and appurtenances thereto, including memorials, are and shall remain the property of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

(c) **REVISED MAPS.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of a land transaction made pursuant to this section, the Tennessee Valley Authority, after consultation with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the Secretary of the Interior, shall submit revised maps that depict the land taken into trust under this section, including any corrections made to the maps described in this section to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate.

(d) **CONTOUR ELEVATION CLARIFICATION.**—The contour elevations referred to in this Act are based on MSL Datum as established by the NGS Southeastern Supplementary Adjustment of 1936 (NGVD29).

(e) **CONDITIONS.**—The lands taken into trust under this section shall be subject to the conditions described in section 5.

SEC. 3. PERMANENT EASEMENTS TAKEN INTO TRUST FOR THE EASTERN BAND OF CHEROKEE INDIANS.

(a) **PERMANENT EASEMENTS.**—The following permanent easements for land below the 820-foot (MSL) contour elevation for the following Federal lands in Monroe County, Tennessee, on the shores of Tellico Reservoir, are declared to be held in trust by the United States for the benefit of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians:

(1) **CHOTA PENINSULA.**—Approximately 8.5 acres of land generally depicted as “Chota Memorial 2” on the map titled “Eastern Band of Cherokee Historic Lands Reacquisition Map 3” and dated April 30, 2015.

(2) **CHOTA-TANASI TRAIL.**—Approximately 11.4 acres of land generally depicted as “Chota-Tanasi Trail” on the map titled “Eastern Band of Cherokee Historic Lands Reacquisition Map 3” and dated April 30, 2015.

(b) **REVISED MAPS.**—Not later than 1 year after the date of a land transaction made pursuant to this section, the Tennessee Valley Authority, after consultation with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and the Secretary of the Interior, shall submit to the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate revised maps that depict the lands subject to easements taken into trust under this section, including any corrections necessary to the maps described in this section.

(c) **CONDITIONS.**—The lands subject to easements taken into trust under this section shall be subject to the use rights and conditions described in section 5.

SEC. 4. TRUST ADMINISTRATION AND PURPOSES.

(a) **APPLICABLE LAWS.**—Except as described in section 5, the lands subject to this Act shall be administered under the laws and regulations generally applicable to lands and interests in lands held in trust on behalf of Indian tribes.

(b) **USE OF LAND.**—Except the lands described in section 2(a)(2), the lands subject to this Act shall be used principally for memorializing and interpreting the history and culture of Indians and recreational activities, including management, operation, and conduct of programs of and for—

(1) the Sequoyah birthplace memorial and museum;

(2) the memorials to Chota and Tanasi as former capitals of the Cherokees;

(3) the memorial and place of reinterment for remains of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and other Cherokee tribes, including those transferred to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and other Cherokee tribes and those human remains and cultural items transferred by the Tennessee Valley Authority to those Cherokee tribes under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (25 U.S.C. 3001 et seq.); and

(4) interpreting the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail.

(c) **USE OF SUPPORT PROPERTY.**—The land described in section 2(a)(2) shall be used principally for the support of lands subject to this Act and the programs offered by the Tribe relating to such lands and their purposes including—

(1) classrooms and conference rooms;

(2) cultural interpretation and education programs;

(3) temporary housing of guests participating in such programs or the management of the properties and programs; and

(4) headquarters offices and support space for the trust properties and programs.

(d) **LAND USE.**—The principal purposes of the use of the land described in section 3(a)—

(1) paragraph (1), shall be for a recreational trail from the general vicinity of the parking lot to the area of the Chota Memorial and beyond to the southern portion of the peninsula, including interpretive signs, benches, and other compatible improvements; and

(2) paragraph (2), shall be for a recreational trail between the Chota and Tanasi Memorials, including interpretive signs, benches, and other compatible improvements.

SEC. 5. USE RIGHTS, CONDITIONS.

(a) **FLOODING OF LAND AND ROADS.**—The Tennessee Valley Authority may temporarily and intermittently flood the lands subject to this Act that lie below the 824-foot (MSL) contour elevation and the road access to such lands that lie below the 824-foot (MSL) contour elevation.

(b) **FACILITIES AND STRUCTURES.**—The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians may construct, own, operate, and maintain—

(1) water use facilities and nonhabitable structures, facilities, and improvements not subject to serious damage if temporarily flooded on the land adjoining the Tellico Reservoir side of the lands subject to this Act that lie between the 815-foot and 820-foot (MSL) contour elevations, but only after having received written consent from the Tennessee Valley Authority and subject to the terms of such approval; and

(2) water use facilities between the 815-foot (MSL) contour elevations on the Tellico Reservoir side of the lands subject to this Act and the adjacent waters of Tellico Reservoir and in and on such waters after having received written consent from the Tennessee Valley Authority and subject to the terms of such approval, but may not construct, own, operate, or maintain other nonhabitable structures, facilities, and improvements on such lands.

(c) **INGRESS AND EGRESS.**—The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians may use the lands subject to this Act and Tellico Reservoir for ingress and egress to and from such land and the waters of the Tellico Reservoir and to and from all structures, facilities, and improvements maintained in, on, or over such land or waters.

(d) **RIVER CONTROL AND DEVELOPMENT.**—The use rights under this section may not be exercised so as to interfere in any way with the Tennessee Valley Authority’s statutory program for river control and development.

(e) **TVA AUTHORITIES.**—Nothing in this Act shall be construed to affect the right of the Tennessee Valley Authority to—

(1) draw down Tellico Reservoir;

(2) fluctuate the water level thereof as may be necessary for its management of the Reservoir; or

(3) permanently flood lands adjacent to lands subject to this Act that lie below the 815-foot (MSL) contour elevation.

(f) **RIGHT OF ENTRY.**—The lands subject to this Act shall be subject to a reasonable right of entry by the personnel of the Tennessee Valley Authority and agents of the Tennessee Valley Authority operating in their official capacities as necessary for purposes of carrying out the Tennessee Valley Authority’s statutory program for river control and development.

(g) **ENTRY ONTO LAND.**—To the extent that the Tennessee Valley Authority’s operations on the lands subject to this Act do not unreasonably interfere with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians’ maintenance of an appropriate setting for the memorialization of Cherokee history or culture on the lands and its operations on the lands, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians shall allow the Tennessee Valley Authority to enter the lands to clear, ditch, dredge, and drain said lands and apply larvicides and chemicals thereon or to conduct bank protection work and erect structures necessary in the promotion and furtherance of public health, flood control, and navigation.

(h) **LOSS OF HYDROPOWER CAPACITY.**—All future development of the lands subject to this Act shall be subject to compensation to the Tennessee Valley Authority for loss of hydropower capacity as provided in the Tennessee Valley Authority Flood Control Storage Loss Guideline, unless agreed to otherwise by the Tennessee Valley Authority.

(i) **PROTECTION FROM LIABILITY.**—The United States shall not be liable for any loss or damage resulting from—

(1) the temporary and intermittent flooding of lands subject to this Act;

(2) the permanent flooding of adjacent lands as provided in this section;

(3) wave action in Tellico Reservoir; or

(4) fluctuation of water levels for purposes of managing Tellico Reservoir.

(j) **CONTINUING RESPONSIBILITIES.**—The Tennessee Valley Authority shall—

(1) retain sole and exclusive Federal responsibility and liability to fund and implement any environmental remediation requirements that are required under applicable Federal or State law for any land or interest in land to be taken into trust under this Act, as well as the assessments under paragraph (2) to identify the type and quantity of any potential hazardous substances on the lands;

(2) prior to the acquisition in trust, carry out an assessment and notify the Secretary of the Interior and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians whether any hazardous substances were stored on the lands and, if so, whether those substances—

(A) were stored for 1 year or more on the lands;

(B) were known to have been released on the lands; or

(C) were known to have been disposed of on the lands; and

(3) if the assessment under paragraph (2) shows that hazardous substances were stored, released, or disposed of on the lands, include in its notice under paragraph (2) to the Secretary of the Interior and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians—

(A) the type and quantity of such hazardous substances;

(B) the time at which such storage, release, or disposal took place on the lands; and

(C) a description of any remedial actions, if any, taken on the lands.

SEC. 6. LANDS SUBJECT TO THE ACT.

For the purposes of this Act, the term "lands subject to this Act" means lands and interests in lands (including easements) taken into trust for the benefit of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians pursuant to or under this Act.

SEC. 7. GAMING PROHIBITION.

No class II or class III gaming, as defined in the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.), shall be conducted on lands subject to this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 548, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 548, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Historic Lands Reacquisition Act, introduced by my friend from Tennessee, Congressman FLEISCHMANN. H.R. 548 places approximately 96 acres of Tennessee Valley Authority land and permanent easements into trust along the shores of the Little Tennessee River and Tellico Reservoir in Monroe County, Tennessee, for the benefit of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

These areas include the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum, the Chota Memorial, the Tanasi Memorial, and land to support these properties and cultural programs.

The parcels placed into trust under the bill will primarily be used to memorialize and interpret the history of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is one of three federally recognized Cherokee Tribes and is the only federally recognized Tribe in North Carolina. Their ancestral homeland includes substantial parts of seven eastern States, including Tennessee.

The 57,000-acre Qualla Boundary is the name of the Cherokee Indian Reservation in North Carolina. In 1979, after the completion of the Tellico Dam by the Tennessee Valley Authority, or TVA, the Tribe approached the TVA about lands that are of historical significance to the Tribe that were impacted by the dam.

The Tribe and the TVA informally agreed to allow the Tribe to manage two easements in 1984 and 1986, including the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum.

H.R. 548 helps this cause by transferring approximately 76 acres of historically significant lands from the TVA to the U.S. Government to be held in

trust for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

It also places two permanent easements over TVA property to be held in trust for the Tribe to create recreational trails between the sites.

This legislation will give the Eastern Band greater control over their historic homelands and the opportunity to memorialize the history and culture of the Cherokee people.

Gaming pursuant to the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act will be prohibited, and the bill also ensures that the TVA will be able to continue its river control and development activities to power the Tennessee Valley region.

I urge adoption of the measure, and I commend the gentleman from Tennessee for his continued work on this important legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I would first like to start by thanking the chairman of the Committee on Natural Resources as well as the sponsor of the bill for bringing this bill to the floor of the House today. These bipartisan bills affecting Native American Tribes and Nations in our country are very important and very significant for the Tribes that are seeking land into trust recognition.

This bill itself is an example of how the various agencies and local entities within Tennessee worked together to come up with a compromise bill that can be supported by all. I look forward to having these bills actually get signed into law as they have passed in Congresses past.

As noted, H.R. 548 is the Eastern Band of Cherokee Historic Lands Reacquisition Act introduced by Representative FLEISCHMANN of Tennessee. We noted that it is intended to take lands and easements into trust for the use and benefit of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Nation.

As we pointed out, these include the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum, the Chota Memorial, the Tanasi Memorial, and land to support these properties and cultural programs.

We remember that the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians is one of three federally recognized Cherokee Tribes and is the only federally recognized Tribe in North Carolina.

The ability of the Tribe to take these lands into trust and then to be able to use them to preserve their cultural ties to the land is really significant.

The two bills that we are considering on the floor have significance beyond the acres themselves because they are an outgrowth of an evolving United States policy to Native American governments. The United States has moved from an era where it systematically pushed Native Americans off their ancestral lands into ever smaller territories of reservation land. We are seeing now the reverse of that as we move to take land into trust for the Eastern Band of Cherokees.

Madam Speaker, I support the bill, I urge my colleagues to vote in favor, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. FLEISCHMANN), the sponsor of the bill.

Mr. FLEISCHMANN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of my bill, H.R. 548, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Historic Lands Requisition Act. I thank the chair and the distinguished ranking member both for their very kind words of support for this very important legislation.

This legislation has passed in this House before. It needs to pass tonight. It needs to go to the Senate and it needs to be on the President's desk. It has been far too long. The Eastern Band of Cherokee have been waiting and had a lot of promises made to them over the years which have been broken. This a great bill for America, and it is a great bill that we honor our wonderful Eastern Band of Cherokees.

The great State of Tennessee, my home State, gets its name from the historic Overhill Cherokee settlement called Tanasi, located in present-day Monroe County, Tennessee. Tanasi served as the capital of the Cherokee people from as early as 1721.

Unfortunately, as a result of misguided Federal policies, the Cherokee people were forcibly removed from their homes in Tennessee and the surrounding States. This tragic period in American history led to the Trail of Tears, a journey on which the United States forcibly marched 15,000 Cherokees to the Indian Territory.

My bill, the Eastern Band Cherokee Historic Lands Reacquisition Act, returns important historic sites back to the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, the Tribal Nation comprised of descendants of those Cherokees who resisted removal in the Great Smoky Mountains and escaped the Trail of Tears.

It is on these same lands where the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians have for decades honored the birthplace of Sequoyah, whose likeness we all have the opportunity to pass as we make our way from the rotunda of our Capitol to this House floor.

H.R. 548 would return 76.1 acres. I want to be clear: It is only 76.1 acres of TVA land back to the Eastern Band of Cherokees in trust and grant two permanent easements over TVA property to be held in trust for the Tribe for creating recreational trails between the sites.

The Tribe is committed to improving the educational resources of the Sequoyah Birthplace Museum and to provide a means for economic development for the local community through cultural tourism.

The Cherokee Nation has a rich history in the Third District of Tennessee, and I am grateful to be engaged in the process to safeguard their story.

Madam Speaker, I strongly urge Members of both Chambers to understand the importance of the Cherokee

Tribal land preservation and support H.R. 548 so that it may be brought to President Biden's desk in a timely manner.

Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

I would just like to compliment the sponsor's explanation of the benefits that this bill will bring. We have heard a little bit of the great history that lies within Tennessee and of the resilience of the Eastern Band of Cherokee as they have maintained their identity to the land and that their use of the land will further assist the members of this wonderful country of ours to learn a bit more about that history, to learn a bit more about the life that is breathed into the statues that we surround ourselves with here in the people's House.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

Again, I thank the gentleman from Tennessee for introducing this bill, and I appreciate his tireless work on it. I thank the gentlewoman from New Mexico and the minority support on this piece of bipartisan legislation.

I will say that H.R. 548 is a common-sense bill that facilitates greater control for the Eastern Band of Cherokee over their sacred and historic homelands in Tennessee. It ensures the protection of their timeless heritage, culture, and tradition, and gives them the opportunity to memorialize the history and culture of the Cherokee people.

The Tribe has worked with the Tennessee Valley Authority for more than three decades, and this legislation is long overdue.

Madam Speaker, I thank Mr. FLEISCHMANN for his leadership and fulfilling a vital constituent service. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support to H.R. 548 the Eastern Band of Cherokee Historic Lands Reacquisition Act.

H.R. 548 aims to take certain Federal lands in Tennessee into trust for the benefit of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

These lands are intended to be utilized for memorialization, the interpretation of Cherokee history and culture, as well as a space for meeting for events and performing traditions.

For historically significant locations like the Chota and Tanasi, locations that once served as the Cherokee Nation's Capital, memorials are to be built.

From as early as 1721 to 1730, Tanasi functioned as the Overhill Cherokee's de facto capital.

The Cherokee historically were forced to abandon Tanasi, a historic Overhill settlement in modern-day Monroe County, Tennessee, in the 19th century in due to a rising town whose chief held more power.

Chota similarly an Overhill Cherokee towns site in Monroe County, Tennessee that developed after the loss of Tanasi.

The history of the Cherokee is one that is long and rich with history, yet many persecutions from early the USA infringes on their culture.

They are estimated to have numbered around 22,500 people in 1650 and oversaw an area of the Appalachian Mountains that now is part of Georgia, part of eastern Tennessee, and part of what is now North and South Carolina.

The desire for fertile farmland during the Southeast's rapid expansion of cotton cultivation, the finding of gold on Cherokee territory, and the racial prejudice that many white southerners had against American Indians were all factors in the removal of the Cherokees.

The tribe gave up about 4 million acres of territory between 1783 and 1819 in the hopes that this would put a halt to ongoing displacement efforts.

As authorized by the Indian Removal Act of 1830, which resulted in the creation of the Trail of Tears, the Federal Government negotiated treaties aimed at clearing Indian-occupied land for white settlers.

An estimated 4,000 of the roughly 16,000 Cherokee who were forcibly removed between 1836 and 1839 passed away during this process.

The Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians was the name given to the Cherokee by the U.S. Government in 1868 after many decades of struggle.

The relationship between the USA and the American Indian tribes is far from perfect.

As such, offering the Cherokee this land to help rebuild the culture that the United States actively displaced is a worthy cause.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 548.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PALA BAND OF MISSION INDIANS LAND TRANSFER ACT OF 2023

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 423) to take certain land located in San Diego County, California, into trust for the benefit of the Pala Band of Mission Indians, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 423

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Pala Band of Mission Indians Land Transfer Act of 2023".

SEC. 2. TRANSFER OF LAND IN TRUST FOR THE PALA BAND OF MISSION INDIANS.

(a) TRANSFER AND ADMINISTRATION.—

(1) TRANSFER OF LANDS INTO TRUST.—If, not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Tribe transfers title to the land referred to in subsection (b) to the United States, the Secretary, not later than 180 days after such transfer, shall take

that land into trust for the benefit of the Tribe.

(2) ADMINISTRATION.—The land transferred under paragraph (1) shall be part of the Pala Indian Reservation and administered in accordance with the laws and regulations generally applicable to land held in trust by the United States for an Indian Tribe.

(b) LAND DESCRIPTION.—The land referred to in subsection (a)(1) is the approximately 721.12 acres of land located in San Diego County, California, generally depicted as "Gregory Canyon Property Boundary" on the map titled "Pala Gregory Canyon Property Boundary and Parcels".

(c) RULES OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act shall—

(1) enlarge, impair, or otherwise affect any right or claim of the Tribe to any land or interest in land that is in existence before the date of the enactment of this Act;

(2) affect any water right of the Tribe in existence before the date of the enactment of this Act; or

(3) terminate or limit any access in any way to any right-of-way or right-of-use issued, granted, or permitted before the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) RESTRICTED USE OF TRANSFERRED LANDS.—The Tribe may not conduct, on the land taken into trust for the Tribe pursuant to this Act, gaming activities—

(1) as a matter of claimed inherent authority; or

(2) under any Federal law, including the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (25 U.S.C. 2701 et seq.) and regulations promulgated by the Secretary or the National Indian Gaming Commission under that Act.

(e) DEFINITIONS.—For the purposes of this section:

(1) SECRETARY.—The term "Secretary" means the Secretary of the Interior.

(2) TRIBE.—The term "Tribe" means the Pala Band of Mission Indians.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) and the gentlewoman from New Mexico (Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 423, the bill now under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 423, the Pala Band of Mission Indians Land Transfer Act, introduced by my good friend from California, Congressman ISSA, places approximately 721 acres of land the Pala Band of Mission Indians currently owns into trust.

The Pala Band of Mission Indians are in the southern California town of Pala, with the reservation totaling approximately 12,000 acres. While the Tribal economy is largely supported by agricultural enterprises, the Tribe also operates a 86,000-square-foot Class III casino and resort.

In the early 1990s, San Diego County voters approved a plan to establish the